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Mr. P. N. Marthandam Pillai.
,, Bollini Muniswami Nayudu.
Rao Bahadur A. M. Murugappa Chettiyar.
Mr. Cheyyur Muttayya Mudaliyar.
,, S. Muthiah Mudaliyar.
,, Paramasivam Chettiyar Chidambaram Chettiyar Muthu Chettiyar.
,, Olappanna Manakkal Narayanan Nambudripad.
Rao Sahib T. Cuttia Pillai Tangavelu Pillai.
Rao Bahadur Ottilingam Tanikachalam Chettiyar.
Mr. Vellakkinar Chinnappa Gounder Vellingiri Gounder.
,, K. Venkatachela Padayachi.
,, Rangaswami Veerayyan.
Rao Bahadur Chimala-Vagupalli Venkata Ranga Reddi.
,, Pethachi Karuppan Alagappa Chidambaram Virappa Chettiyar.
Diwan Bahadur Pattu Kesava Pillai.
Mr. Ponnambala Tyagarajan.
,, Papanad Swaminatha Rajappa.
,, Bezwada Ramachandra Reddi.
Rao Sahib Krishnachar Vidyapurnachar Ramachari.
Rao Bahadur Panagattan Raman.
Mr. Arcot Ramaswami Mudaliyar.
,, Walajanagar Vijayaraghava Mudaliyar.
,, Abbas Ali Khan.
Khan Bahadur Haji Abdulla Haji Qasim Sahib Bahadur.
Mr. Tenkasi Nathadu Bava Ravuttar Muhammad Sahib Bahadur.
,, M. Abdulla Ghattala Sahib.
,, Vappakandu Hamid Sultan Marakkayar Sahib.
,, Abdul Hye Sahib.
Khan Bahadur P. Khalif-ul-lah Sahib.
Mr. T. M. Moidu Sahib.
,, Muhammad Moosa Sait Sahib.
,, Saiyid Diwan Abdul Razaaq Sahib.
,, Kottal Uppi Sahib.
,, Munshi Abdul Wahab Sahib.
,, Muhammad Yahya Ali Sahib.

II

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

His Excellency the GOVERNOR :—" Mr. President and Members of the Madras Legislative Council : It is a great pleasure to me, as head of the Government, to meet and to greet here this morning the Members of our new Legislative Council, both elected and nominated, at the commencement of the new period of its life, who will, I know, assist me and my Government in the responsible task of developing and advancing the various branches of our administration and the welfare and prosperity of all classes of our people.

" My main duty to-day is to inform hon. Members of the principal legislative measures which Government propose to bring forward during the coming session, but before doing so there are one or two matters on which I wish to make a few remarks.

"Hon. Members would, I am sure, wish me warmly to congratulate our President on his appointment as a Member of the Secretary of State's Council (cheers), and at the same time to express our sense of the very great loss that we shall sustain when he retires from the position of President of our Council over whose deliberations he has presided with such outstanding ability for the past three years. But we have this consolation that we shall have in him a powerful friend at the India Office and I trust that his intimate knowledge of, and broad outlook upon, Indian affairs will influence and guide future policy with regard to this country on the best and most understanding lines.

"The Presidency has sustained a great loss through the death of one of its foremost citizens in the person of Sir K. Srinivasa Ayyangar, whose brilliant intellectual qualities had raised him to a very prominent position in various branches of our public life. I was fortunate in being closely associated with him for over two years and feel that by his death I have lost a loyal and affectionate personal friend. His strong and determined views and convictions made it sometimes extremely difficult for him to accommodate himself to the spirit of compromise which is often a necessity in our public life, but I am sure he will always be remembered as a great gentleman, who by his absolute honesty of purpose and charm of character, endeared himself to all who had the privilege of his acquaintance.

"I very much regret to have to inform hon. Members that a recent cyclonic disturbance in the north of the Presidency has, from the reports we have received, done a considerable amount of damage in Vizagapatam and the neighbouring areas. I regret extremely to state that several lives have been lost owing to the effects of the gale which appears to have blown down many houses.

"It is impossible to give hon. Members any detailed account of the damage done and this may not be available for some days until telegraphic communications have been restored, but I can assure hon. Members that all necessary steps are being taken to relieve the immediate distress by our officers. A Member of the Board of Revenue is already on the spot, and I trust he may soon be able to send us a full report of the damage done, and on receipt of his recommendations Government will at once consider what steps are necessary in the matter of relief and repair.

"I now wish to refer to certaim matters which have come to my notice in connexion with our efforts to push forward the policy of Local Self-Government through our Municipalities and District Local Boards. This question is of such importance and of such intimate concern to every hon. Member of this Council that I venture to express myself on it at considerable length.

"It will be remembered that Government, in the year before the introduction of the Reforms, passed important measures dealing with Local Self-Government which gave very widely extended powers to non-officials in regard to the administration of these bodies. We did so deliberately at the time because we felt that responsibility for administration should be given at once in these lesser bodies as a training ground for non-officials in all parts of our Presidency, and as a real test of the manner in which they would undertake their important duties. The passing of these Bills has had far-reaching effects on the administration of local affairs. Official control has been relaxed and restricted to emergencies when danger to public health or safety is imminent; the strength of Boards and Councils has been considerably increased

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and nominations confined to the backward classes; the franchise has been extended to all persons who pay any of the principal taxes; local bodies have been given almost complete control over their budgets and their subordinate establishments; and taluk boards have been made statutorily and to a large extent administratively independent of district boards.

"This almost entire relaxation of official control has placed an immense responsibility on non-official Presidents, but this has not been the only difficulty under which they started their administrative duties. Owing to a combination of circumstances which I propose shortly to describe, local bodies got involved in grave financial embarrassments from which the Government have only just now extricated them. Under the new Acts certain specific services were assigned to taluk boards, who were also allotted certain sources of revenue for financing them, and I am free to admit that in our anxiety to see these Bills passed into law the Government did not make sufficient enquiry or examination as to the adequacy of the funds allotted for the purpose of the discharge of the duties imposed by the Acts. Again, it was always the custom before the Reforms for the Government to dole out large sums of money for local expenditure. Although there was no guarantee that these doles could be continued, local bodies have got so accustomed to a recurring scramble for doles that it has been a very difficult task to correct this attitude and to induce them to rely more on their own resources and to utilize to the full their powers of taxation.

"The situation also was considerably aggravated by the high prices following on the war and the general feeling that because the war (which had suspended all development) was over and the Reforms had been introduced, an era of very rapid progress would supervene. There was consequently a tendency among local bodies towards reckless expenditure on schemes of development, without regard to their financial position. Unfortunately, during these three years too, the Government, partly owing to the various causes which have affected local finances and partly owing to the payment of the provincial contribution to the Government of India, were in great financial difficulties themselves and have been unable to come to the rescue of local bodies.

"I have dwelt on these facts at some length, because in appraising the work of non-officials it is important that it should be realized that they had formidable difficulties to encounter, for it is certain that this extraordinary combination of circumstances to which I have referred would have made local administration during this transition period extremely difficult under any conditions and that the inexperience of and consequent mistakes made by non-officials was only one of the causes which has led to deterioration of the financial administration of local bodies.

"The finances of local bodies have now been brought into a state of solvency and some system in the distribution of provincial subsidies has been introduced, but much will yet have to be done before the system is organized on sound and satisfactory lines, and this will require the co-operation of all branches of the administration.

"Having spoken of some of the difficulties of local administration during the last three years, let me now come to the shortcomings—some of them inevitable in a transitional period—of the non-official agency on which some friendly advice may perhaps be offered.

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"(1) The first is what I must call the very unfortunate dislike and distrust of any official advice or control by many local bodies. Whether it be the Collector or any inspecting agency such as the Auditor or the Inspector, they seem to resent and have sometimes protested against what they call Government interference. Local bodies have not adequately realized the fact that they have been entrusted with some of the most important services affecting the national welfare and that for these services the Minister in charge is responsible to the Legislative Council. No Government, however democratic and advanced politically, could afford to allow local bodies to neglect these services of national importance. I must ask all members of district boards and municipal councils to realize that Inspectors and Auditors are absolutely essential to secure the necessary control over and inspection of their administration, and as some safeguard against possible negligence and incompetency in carrying out their duties.

"(2) Secondly, there have been allegations of a tendency among the salaried officers of the boards and councils to shirk their legitimate work and pay more attention to the individual wants and wishes of the members of the boards. So long as the Collector was the controlling authority, these officers were more or less under the same restraints as Government officials and one of the inevitable results of transfer of authority to an inexperienced non-official agency is lessening of control. It is my very sincere hope that increased experience will remedy these defects and that all their salaried officers will in the future be under the necessary discipline and control.

"(3) Thirdly, there are indications that the importance of a high standard of efficiency and purity in local administration has not yet been adequately appreciated by the public. I should like in this connexion to emphasise the importance of this point by quoting a few lines from the Montagu-Chelmsford report which specially deal with this matter :

'It is by taking part in the management of local affairs that aptitude for handling the problems of Government will most readily be acquired. This applies to those who administer, but even more to those who judge of the administration. Among the clever men who come to the front in provincial politics there will be some who will address themselves without more difficulty, and indeed with more interest and zeal, to the problems of Government than to those of municipal or district board administration. But the unskilled elector who has hitherto concerned himself neither with one nor the other, can learn to judge of things afar off only by accustoming himself to judge first of things near at hand. This is why it is of the utmost importance to the constitutional progress of the country that every effort should be made in local bodies to extend the franchise, to arouse interest in elections and to develop local committees, so that education in citizenship may as far as possible be extended, and everywhere begin in a practical manner. If our proposals for changes on the higher levels are to be a success, there must be no hesitation or faltering about changes in local bodies. Responsible institutions will not be stably-rooted until they become broad-based ; and far-sighted Indian politicians will find no field into which their energies can be more profitably thrown than in developing the boroughs and communes of their country.'

"I think it may truly be said that there has been no hesitation or faltering on the part of the Government in handing over authority and control in local affairs to non-officials. It is for them now to prove their fitness for

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their task. They have had, as I have shown, many difficulties to contend with in the past three years, and it would not be fair at present to give any final judgment of their work, but I do wish to impress this very strongly on them all and I would earnestly ask hon. Members also to impress it upon all local bodies in their various districts that it is not only by the manner in which hon. Members in this Council exercise their widely extended powers in regard to provincial administration, but it is also by the manner in which local bodies and municipalities carry out their heavy responsibilities that this Presidency will be judged as to whether it is fitted to advance to responsible government.

"Members of this Council will have observed that in exercising the power of nomination vested in me as the head of the Government, I have kept in view two cardinal principles; in the first place, that the various depressed and backward classes should be represented in such numbers as will enable them to exercise an effective influence and voice the interests of their community in this Council; and in the second place, that, as far as possible, members of such depressed and backward communities should be represented by persons belonging to such communities. It is a great satisfaction to me to feel that my Government will have the assistance of a considerable number of such nominated members in the Council and will no longer be reproached on the ground that they are oblivious of the interests of these communities or that opportunities have not been given to them to ameliorate their condition. It rests now with them to make the best possible use of these opportunities and by the force of their advocacy to win the support of this Council on behalf of the communities which they represent.

"And now let me inform hon. Members of the legislation which we propose to introduce for their consideration during this session. Our principal Bill will be the Irrigation Bill which will be re-introduced by my hon. colleague Mr. Ramaswami Ayyar, and I feel sure that I can rely on every hon. Member to assist us in our efforts to consolidate our irrigation law in this Presidency, and place ourselves on an equal footing with other provinces in regard to our legislation connected with irrigation. Every effort has been made to ascertain the wishes of representatives of all the interests concerned and to remove all misgivings that arose, I am afraid, out of a misconception of the desire of the Government whose idea has not been to confiscate any private rights, but to bring about the greatest benefit to the largest number in a country whose prosperity is so entirely dependent on the improvement of irrigation. I much hope, too, that we shall be able to introduce legislation which will bring up-to-date and codify the Estates Land Act.

"The other Bills which we hope to lay before hon. Members are the Court-fees Bill and Civil Courts Act, amending Bills to the Madras Proprietary Estates Village Service Act and the Madras Hereditary Village Offices Act, to the Madras Village Panchayat Act, the Madras District Municipalities and Local Boards Act, to the Madras Hackney Carriage Act, the Tenancy Act and the Elementary Education Act; also the Tuticorin Port Trust Bill and Cochin Port Trust Bill. These and other matters will, I am sure, receive the most careful consideration from hon. Members of this Council.

"I have also to inform hon. Members that I have decided to allot six days for private members' business during the session. These days will be allotted at the discretion of the hon. the President.

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"Let me express in conclusion the profound hope that Providence will guide you all in your labours in the best and truest interests of our Presidency and its people."

The hon. the PRESIDENT:—"Before adjourning for lunch, I have to inform hon. Members that a bust of His Majesty the King-Emperor, which is a gift of the hon. the Raja of Panagal, will be unveiled by His Excellency the Governor at 5 p.m., and all hon. Members are invited to attend. When we meet again the only business is the election of the Deputy President which, I believe, will not take much time. The Council will now adjourn and meet again at quarter to 5 p.m."

The House then adjourned for lunch.

The Council re-assembled at 4-45 p.m.

III

ELECTION OF DEPUTY PRESIDENT.

The hon. the PRESIDENT:—"With regard to the election of the Deputy President I have received the following nomination proposed by Mr. Krishnan Nayar and seconded by Mr. A. Ramaswami Mudaliyar that Diwan Bahadur P. Kesava Pillai be elected Deputy President. Since only one person has been proposed for the election I hereby declare that Diwan Bahadur P. Kesava Pillai is duly elected Deputy President." (Cheers.)

Diwan Bahadur M. KRISHNAN NAYAR:—"I crave leave to congratulate my old and respected friend, Mr. Kesava Pillai, on his having been elected unanimously as Deputy President for the second time. In saying this, I am confident, as was evidenced by the applause, that I am voicing the feelings of the whole House. Mr. Kesava Pillai has been a member of the Legislative Council for about sixteen years. He has been always on the side of the people. He has always been a very hard fighter and he always fought with only clean weapons and never left any wound on the person he attacked. (Laughter.) Let us hope that Mr. Kesava Pillai will live long, elected to successive Legislative Councils and also ultimately earn the coveted appellation—'the father of the Legislative Council'." (Cheers.)

Diwan Bahadur P. KESAVA PILLAI:—"Mr. President, Sir, may I have the pleasure of thanking the House for the great honour they have conferred on me for the second time. I know there are many distinguished hon. Members of this House who would have done justice to the position and who seem to stand aside because I, an old member of the Council, is coveting it. And they have been very generous in standing aside and allowing me to be re-elected again unanimously in this Council. I am conscious of the many shortcomings during the last time and I hope to do better in the future. I crave the indulgence of the House and the support of one and all the hon. Members of this Council in carrying on the duties of the President in his absence and to the satisfaction of the House. With these few words I beg to thank the House most sincerely for the honour they have conferred on me."

5 p.m. The Council then rose for the day to meet again at 11 a.m. the next day.

L. D. SWAMIKANNU,
Secretary to the Legislative Council.